

Scoring AIMS Writing

The Arizona Department of Education Assessment Section has collaborated with the test vendor to design the training and process for scoring AIMS Writing.

AIMS 3-8 Writing is read and scored by one evaluator with a 10% read-behind by scoring directors. AIMS HS writing is read and scored by two evaluators. The score for a HS paper is reached by adding the two scores together and dividing by two. The result may be at .5 increments (e.g., 3.5). If the two scores assigned for a HS paper are discrepant (e.g., a 3 and a 5), the scoring director reads the paper a third time and the director's score is reported. The Arizona Academic Writing Standard, the Holistic Rubric Based on 6 Traits, and teacher selected anchor sets are used by all evaluators to determine the score for each response.

Training and Maintaining Scoring Integrity for AIMS Writing

ADE and the test vendor collaborate to ensure that the scoring process is fair, reliable, and consistent.

Step 1 – Anchor sets are designated by Arizona teachers. (See “Scoring for Rangefinding” on the AIMS Writing page.)

Anchor papers are compiled from Arizona student responses to field test prompts. The following procedures are employed.

- Teachers review and score responses.
- Exemplars for each score point are identified and annotated.
- Annotations are linked directly to the rubric and student responses.
- Responses are selected for anchor, training, and qualification sets.
- Sets are reviewed to ensure alignment to grade level expectations.
- Sets are reviewed across grade levels to ensure upward spiraling skill expectations.

Step 2 – Evaluators are trained and qualified.

Evaluators must be college graduates. They complete a rigorous training and qualification process using the sets of papers identified by Arizona teachers. ADE and the test vendor have designed the training to include the responses written by Arizona students, the Holistic Rubric Based on 6 Traits, and the Arizona Academic Writing Standard. Evaluators are trained and must qualify prior to scoring. The following steps represent the training and qualification process.

- Trainers review the Holistic Rubric Based on 6 Traits, discussing each score point.
- Trainers read, review, and discuss the anchor sets and annotations.
- Evaluators score a training set.
- Trainers review and discuss the training set scores.
- Evaluators score a second training set.
- Trainers review and discuss the training set scores.
- Evaluators score the first qualification set.

- Qualified evaluators (70% correct or better) begin scoring.
- Evaluators who achieve 70% or better on a second qualification set begin scoring.
- Evaluators who do not qualify are dismissed.

Step 3 – Monitoring is a priority.

Monitoring the scoring process is ongoing until all responses are scored. Scoring directors continuously employ quality control measures.

- Team leaders conduct read-behinds to monitor evaluators.
- Check sets (pre-scored responses) are administered to evaluators multiple times each day.
- Evaluators who do not score responses in a check set correctly.
- Targeted check sets to monitor retrained evaluators are administered to follow up on the remediation.
- Evaluators who fail to score correctly in a second check set must pass an additional qualification round before scoring again.
- Evaluators who do not pass qualification with 70% or better are dismissed.

Step 4 – Coding (See “Coding” on AIMS Writing page.)

Responses are assigned condition codes if they fit the criteria below. Response codes BL, IL, NE, or OT receive a zero (0) score.

- BL = Blank; IL = illegible; NE = non-English; OT = off-topic
- Blank papers demonstrate no attempt, so they are not scored.
- Off-mode papers will be scored if they are on topic; however, the mode will be reflected as the various bullets within the rubric are applied (e.g., if the mode is persuasion, persuasive vocabulary is required. Off-mode writing will not have persuasive words and the score will reflect the absence of persuasive words.

Attemptedness criteria

To earn a scale score and a performance level, students must have a valid attempt on the prompt **and** must have a valid attempt on the multiple choice items. A valid attempt on the prompt only will result in a prompt score but no scale score and no performance level. Prompt only scores are not included in any summary reports. No valid attempt on the prompt, regardless of a valid attempt on the multiple choice items, will result in a “no valid attempt” for the content area.

- Valid attempt on the prompt results in a score or one of the condition codes listed above.
- Valid attempt on the Writing multiple-choice is at least one item is answered by bubbling the chosen answer. In Grades 5, 6, and 7, one item must be attempted each day of the Reading AIMS as the Writing multiple-choice is embedded within the Reading AIMS.

Summary

ADE and the test vendor score AIMS Writing uniformly for all students, based on the rubric, the anchor sets, and the Arizona Academic Writing Standard. Writing is an important measure of skills for Arizona students. The rubric, the training, the anchor sets, the check sets, the read behinds, and the intensity of the process result in fair and reasonable scores for all students.